

NEWS UPDATE

SHELBY COUNTY OFFICE OF PREPAREDNESS

MEMPHIS & SHELBY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY



**EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER
(901) 515-2525**

August 30, 2008



Emergency Operations Center Status Report Evening Update-Hurricane Victim Relief Efforts

More than 1000 people from the New Orleans area will be arriving in Memphis tonight and early tomorrow morning by Amtrak train. They were ordered out of their homes as hurricane "Gustav" continues its trek towards New Orleans and other areas along the Gulf Coast. As many as 3500 persons who live in the hurricane zone could be brought to Memphis and neighboring counties during the next two days.

"Our primary purpose will be to ensure those required to leave their homes will be given food and shelter until it is safe for them to return to their communities. This relief effort will involve various bureaus of Shelby County and City of Memphis Governments, the Red Cross and other community agencies," said Bob Nations, Director of the Shelby County Office of Preparedness and Memphis and Shelby County Emergency Management Agency.

Buses provided by the Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA) will take evacuees arriving by train to a reception center at the Air National Guard Memphis Headquarters on Democrat Road. Once there, they will be registered, given an armband and then assigned to various shelters set up in Memphis and West Tennessee.

(More)

**Relief Operations Update
August 30, 2008**

Some of those will be housed in the West Tennessee area at shelters operated by the State of Tennessee. However, the majority of evacuees will stay at shelters which have been set up at various community centers operated by the Memphis Park Services.

The Red Cross will manage the shelters. A Memphis and Shelby County Health Department nurse will also be on-site as well as a Shelby County Sheriff's Deputy or Memphis Police Officer to help keep the shelters secure. **"We must again emphasize these shelters are only designed for those hurricane zone evacuees who were ordered out of their homes. No local homeless persons will be admitted,"** added Director Nations.

Food for the shelters will be provided by the Memphis City Schools. Along with those who faced mandatory evacuations, many others in the hurricane zone are coming to Memphis. However, officials with the Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau report almost all area hotels are full. As a result, two shelters have been opened for those who voluntary left the hurricane zone:

- 1. Catholic High School, 61 North McLean**
- 2. Byrne High School, 1475 East Shelby Drive**

As with at the other shelters, the Red Cross is managing the facilities and a health department nurse and either a Shelby County Sheriff's Deputy or Memphis Police Officer is on site for security.

Should there be a need for more shelters some Memphis area churches may open their doors to the evacuees. It is not recommended that churches open shelters unless the sites have been inspected and approved by the Red Cross and the Memphis and Shelby County Health Department.

Additional news releases will be routinely issued to keep the community informed about the hurricane relief efforts.

(END OF RELEASE)